

F₇ 25. (Amended) The component support assembly of claim 23, wherein said second wall of the rigid double-shell box structure is more towards an interior of the vehicle than a fully retracted curved vehicle door window.

F₈ 28. (New) The component support assembly of claim 10 wherein said at least first and second hollows occupy a majority of area on said second wall.

REMARKS

Reconsideration and re-examination of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 10, 12-15 and 17-28 are pending in the present application. By way of the present amendment, claims 10, 12, 15, 17, 20, 23 and 25 have been amended. Claim 28 is new.

In the previous office action of paper number 19, claims 10, 12-15 and 17-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second paragraph, as being indefinite. These claims have been amended as noted by the examiner. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the Section 112 rejection has been rendered mute and that this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 23-25 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by German patent publication No. 19 509 282 (GP '282). Claims 20 and 21 were stated by the examiner as being rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kurihara et al. However, in the discussion of this rejection reference GP '282 is the only reference referred to. Accordingly, this response presumes that the rejection under 102(b) was intended to be based upon GP '282 and Kurihara et al. Finally, claims 13, 18, 22 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over GP '282 in view of Finch et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention is specifically directed to a component support assembly, a subassembly, adapted to be mounted within a vehicle door. The one main advantage presented by this invention over prior support panels is that the component support assembly of the present invention fulfills its function without the

need for additional reinforcement and while at the same time optimizing the use of the available space in the assembly for the location and support of equipment utilized in the operation of the vehicle door and/or various aspects of the vehicle itself.

As recited in claim 10, the present invention is a component support assembly that includes a rigid double-shell box structure. The box structure has a first wall adjacent or facing the interior of the vehicle and a second wall positioned or facing toward the exterior of the vehicle. The second wall is provided with at least first and second hollows spaced apart by a separating member. Additionally, the first wall is connected to the second wall so as to form an enclosed volume with the first hollow of the second wall. Fixedly attached to the first wall, so as to be located within the enclosed volume, are a plurality of vehicle door components. In this manner, the vehicle door components are independently supported by the rigid double-shell box structure. Finally, a surface of the first hollow, the surface facing the door window, is provided with a curved shape to substantially correspond or coincide with a curved shape of a fully retracted door window.

As indicated above, a surface of the first hollow facing the door window is provided with a curved shape to substantially coincide with the curved shape of a fully retracted door window. This curved shape has at least two advantages. First, because the surface of the first hollow has a curved shape, the hollow is an inherently strong thereby enabling the formation of a stable and structurally sound enclosed volume. Provided as such, no additional reinforcement is needed in order to support equipment mounted to the first wall. At the same time, providing a surface of the first hollow with this curved shape coinciding with the curved shape of the fully retracted door window efficiently uses the restricted space within the door itself.

In the Office Action, the Examiner refers to GP '282 as disclosing the claimed first and second hollows and the claimed enclosed volume (i.e., when the vehicle door components are attached to holes within the door panel).

At the outset, Applicants note that cited reference is specifically mentioned in the second paragraph of page one of the present application. As noted therein, the construction presented by GP '282 is basically one where the second wall, the wall which would be toward the exterior of the vehicle, is basically a flat plate and as such

is not stable enough to enable various equipment mounted thereon and the unit be handled as a module. The basically flat shape of the second wall in GP '282 is the source of this instability.

The Examiner also states that the depressions located to the left and right on the second wall (designated as 3) in GP '282 operate as the first and second hollows as claimed. It is noted, however, that each of these recessed portions in wall 3 of GP '282 are provided with openings therethrough. Accordingly, with the openings these recesses cannot form the claimed enclosed volume when the first wall is attached to the second wall.

Finally, it is noted that in reference GP '282 there is no disclosure of a surface of the first hollow having a curved shape to substantially correspond with a curved shape of a fully retracted window. As mentioned above, this curved shape not only aids in the structural rigidity of the claimed component support assembly, but also assists in the efficient use of all the available space within a vehicle door.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 10 is allowable over the art of record.

Independent claims 15, 20, 23 and 25 have been amended to similarly recite features presented in claim 10. Accordingly, the arguments applicable to independent claim 10 are similarly applicable to the rejections of claims 15, 20, 23 and 25. It is respectfully submitted that these claims are likewise allowable.

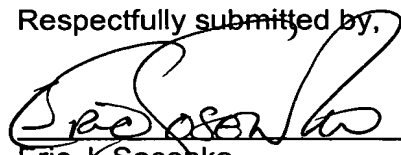
With regard to claims 12-14, 17-19, 21, 22, and 24-27, these claims are dependent from one of the allowed claims mentioned above. In that the independent claims have been shown to be allowable as indicated above, it is respectfully submitted that each of these dependent claims is likewise allowable. Such action is respectfully requested.

Claim 28 is a newly presented claim in this amendment. This claim specifically recites that the at least first and second hollows of the second wall occupy a majority of the area of the second wall. It is respectfully submitted that this claim is allowable as presented.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all the claims of the present application are in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is therefore respectfully requested.

Dated: November 13, 2002

Respectfully submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric J. Sosenko", is written over a horizontal line.

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